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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/731,284	12/09/2003	Markus Nesper	HOE-790	4912

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MONROE, CT 06468

EXAMINER

SHAFFER, RICHARD R

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3733

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	04/19/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/731,284

Applicant(s)

NESPER ET AL.

Examiner

Richard R. Shaffer

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 29 January 2007.
2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-33 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) 25, 26 and 29-33 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-24, 27 and 28 is/are rejected.
7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 09 December 2003 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 12/09/2003.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

Applicant's election without traverse of Species III (**Figure 5**) in the reply filed on January 29th, 2007 is acknowledged.

Claims 25, 26 and 29-33 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected species, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse in the reply filed on January 29th, 2007.

Priority

Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Drawings

The drawings are objected to because reference characters listed in the specification are not found in the drawings (such as 150), the drawings are of poor quality (Figures too close to each other crowding the pages, lines too thick also crowding fine detail within Figures, artifacts are present, lines are not even in thickness and quality). Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the

replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Objections

Claims 1-24, 27 and 28 are objected to because they are generally narrative and indefinite, failing to conform with current U.S. practice. They appear to be a literal translation into English from a foreign document and are replete with grammatical and idiomatic errors. Applicant must correct for spelling errors, improper grammar, and antecedent basis (such as "the hook element" in claim 23) issues found in the claims.

Double Patenting

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 1-24, 27 and 28 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-25 of copending Application No. 10/718,851, claims 1-26 of copending Application No. 10/911,982, and claims 1-35 of copending Application No. 11/702,258. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the difference between this application and the copending applications lies in the fact that the copending applications have claims that include more elements and are thus more specific. Thus, the copending applications are in effect a "species" of the "generic" invention as claimed in this application. It has been held that the generic invention is anticipated by the species. See *In re Goodman*, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993).

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

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(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-11, 13-24, 27 and 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Lerch et al (DE 199 52 359 C1) from applicant's Information Disclosure Statement filed on December 9th, 2003.

Lerch et al disclose an implant (**Figures 1-3**) comprising: an inner abutment element (**18/38/64**); an outer abutment plate (**20/52/66**); a bendable/flexible tension band (**28**) fixable on the outer abutment element as well as fastened to the inner abutment element; the band passes through a first rounded opening (**24a**) located in the inner abutment member, bends around to pass through a second rounded opening (**24b**) also located in the inner abutment member spaced from the first opening causing two portions of the tension band to be parallel to one another (**especially Figures 1 and 2**); the outer abutment member has one or more openings (**32a and 32b/60a and 60b/70**) for allowing the tension band to pass through; the outer abutment openings have rounded deflection edges; the tension band is hookable relative to the outer abutment member along with the outer abutment member including hook elements (**54/72**) with an inclined/steep flank; a dimension of the tension band is greater than another (thereby covering the width is greater than the height); and a dimension of the tension band is in the region between 25% and 75% of a dimension of an abutment element (any type of measurement from an abutment element can suffice, such as openings, spacing between specific features, or any arbitrary locations due to the non-limiting language).

Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Bonutti (US Patent 6,045,551).

Bonutti discloses an implant (**Figures 1-10**) comprising: an inner abutment element (**50**); an outer abutment plate (**32**); a bendable/flexible tension band (**38**) fixable on the outer abutment element as well as fastened to the inner abutment element; the band passes through a first rounded opening (**64**) located in the inner abutment member, bends (**76**) around to pass through a second rounded opening (**66**) also located in the inner abutment member spaced from the first opening causing two portions (**72 and 74**) of the tension band to be parallel to one another (**Figure 2**); the spacing between the two openings is less than 1/8 of the diameter of the inner abutment plate; the outer abutment member has one or more openings (**64 and 66**) for allowing the tension band to pass through; the outer abutment openings have rounded deflection edges; the tension band is hookable relative to the outer abutment member; a dimension of the tension band is greater than another (thereby covering the width is greater than the height); and a dimension of the tension band is in the region between 25% and 75% of a dimension of an abutment element (any type of measurement from an abutment element can suffice, such as openings, spacing between specific features, or any arbitrary locations due to the non-limiting language).

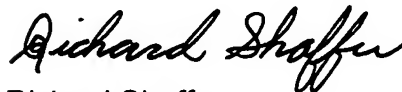
Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Richard R. Shaffer whose telephone number is 571-272-8683. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday (7am-5pm).

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eduardo Robert can be reached on 571-272-4719. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



Richard Shaffer
April 14th, 2007



EDUARDO C. ROBERT
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER